

SENATE BILL 3407
By Crutchfield

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 1, relative to the creation of the Office of Minority Health.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

Section 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 1, is amended by

adding the following as a new appropriately numbered Part:

(68-1-2201) This part shall be known as "The Office of Minority Health Act of 2004" and is enacted for the purpose of educating the public concerning health issues regarding the minority populations in this state and for advocating initiatives to enhance the quality of life and address any disparity of health services available for minorities in this state. This office shall be operated from existing resources of the department of health.

(68-1-2202) As used in this part, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of health;
- (2) "Department" means the department of health;
- (3) "Minorities" include, but are not limited to, African American, Hispanic, Asian American, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern American and the underserved regardless of age, race, economics, gender, language or geographic location.
- (4) "Office" means the office of minority health designated by this part.

(68-1-2203) The office of minority health is designated for the following purposes:

- (1) To assist the commissioner in the assessment of the health needs of the minority populations within the State;
- (2) To recommend to the commissioner methods and programs that are sensitive and relevant to the unique linguistic, cultural and ethnic characteristics of minority populations;
- (3) To provide consultation, technical assistance, training, and reference materials regarding health issues of minorities to service providers, organizations and other agencies;
- (4) To promote awareness of minority health concerns and encourage, promote and aid in the establishment of services to address those concerns;
- (5) To disseminate information on available minority services;
- (6) To provide adequate and effective opportunities for minorities to express their views on departmental policy development and program implementation;
- (7) To coordinate with other agencies providing services to minority populations in an effort to make available services designed to meet the needs of minority residents;
- (8) To develop local coalitions throughout the state that provide local networks of health organizations and associated agencies, and act as a community focus for minority health related programs; and
- (9) To seek funding from various entities or sources to carry out or further the purposes of this part;

(68-1-2204) (a) The commissioner may appoint an advisory council on minority health to assist in advising the office regarding the duties required under this part.

(b) The advisory council shall be comprised of community leaders and persons with expertise in and knowledge of minority health issues in the state. If the advisory committee is established, the commissioner shall determine the number of persons to serve on the committee; appoint a chair or co-chairs for the committee; and establish the policies and procedures under which the committee shall operate.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming law the public welfare requiring it.